

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIEP-02

COME-00 EB-11 FEA-02 FPC-01 INT-08 OMB-01 SCI-06

STR-08 TRSE-00 OIC-04 DRC-01 ACDA-19 NEA-11 (ISO) W

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P R 141137Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6855

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION NATO

USIA WASHDC

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DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR T/IEP

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR/ENRG, FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH PRESS COMMENT ON FINAL DAY ENERGY CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: FRENCH REFUSAL TO SIGN FULL COMMUNIQUE WAS
EMPHASIZED IN THURSDAY MORNING PRESS COVERAGE FINAL DAY ENERGY
CONFERENCE. JOBERT'S PRESS CONFERENCE REMARK THAT DISACCORD
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ARISING FROM MEETING WILL NOT HAVE IMPORTANT CONSEQUENCES FOR

ATLANTIC ALLIANCE OR EUROPEAN COMMUNITY WAS WIDELY NOTED.

FRENCH POLICY IS DISCUSSED EDITORIALY BUT, EXCEPT FOR COMBAT, NOT CRITICIZED. SOME COMMENTATORS FEAR EFFECT OF FRENCH POLICY ON EUROPEAN UNITY, SUCH AS FIGARO'S ALAIN VERNAY WHO VIEWS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE AS POSSIBLE EUROPEAN WATERLOO. END SUMMARY.

1. IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL, FIGARO'S ECONOMIC EXPERT ALAIN VERNAY, WHO COVERED CONFERENCE, ASKS IF IT WAS WORTH THE TROUBLE OF TRYING TO GET ALL THIRTEEN NATIONS TO AGREE TO AT LEAST PART OF THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE, ARGUING THAT EVEN IF UNANIMITY HAD BEEN ACHIEVED "THE ISOLATION OF FRANCE, WHICH WAS BOTH CHOSEN AND IMPOSED, WOULD HAVE BEEN JUST AS REAL IN ANY CASE." VERNAY SAYS THE RESULT OF JOBERT'S OPPOSITION WAS "TO PREVENT A MANIFESTATION IN WORDS OF WHAT HAD ALREADY HAPPENED IN FACT: EUROPE WILL BE ATLANTIC IN ITS ORGANIZATION OR IT WILL NOT BE (AT ALL)." VERNAY WONDERS IF EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES WILL CAUSE THE COMMUNITY TO FALL INTO A STATE OF DISREGARD, BECOMING "LITTLE BY LITTLE, A SORT OF ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION". HE SAYS THE OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS MADE A CHOICE IN WASHINGTON WHICH THEY CAN AMEND ONLY WITH DIFFICULTY: "THEY FEAR LESS A LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE RESULTING FROM A TIGHTENING LEADERSHIP BY THE U.S. -- WHOSE EFFORT TO SHARE ENERGY RESOURCES SEEMED GENEROUS -- THAN THEY FEAR FINDING THEMSELVES IN A POSITION OF INCREASED POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE WITH REGARD TO MIDDLE EAST OIL NATIONS WITH THEIR DEMANDING AND OFTEN UNSTABLE REGIMES."

HE CONCLUDES PESSIMISTICALLY: "WHETHER THERE IS OR NOT, IN THE MORE OR LESS NEAR FUTURE, A SUPERFICIAL REPAIR, THE SPLIT IN THE COMMUNITY WAS SO EVIDENT IN PUBLIC DURING THOSE THREE DAYS THAT THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE, DESPITE THE EFFORTS OF PARTICIPANTS TO MINIMIZE THE RESULTS, RUNS A GREAT RISK OF APPEARING IN HISTORY AS A EUROPEAN WATERLOO.

2. UNDER HEADLINE "WASHINGTON: FRANCE'S FAILURE", COMBAT COMMENTS ON JOBERT'S STATEMENT THAT NEITHER THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE NOR EUROPE IS THREATENED BY THE DISACCORD SHOWN AT CONFERENCE BUT SAYS HE "NEGLECTED TO SAY THAT THE OTHERS ARE BECOMING USED TO GETTING ALONG WITHOUT FRANCE... WE ARE SEEING A REAL REGRESSION OF EUROPEAN UNITY, PARTICULARLY IN THE MONETARY AND ENERGY FIELDS."

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COMBAT CONCEDES THAT FRANCE HAS EVERY RIGHT TO FOLLOW A POLICY UNPOPULAR WITH HER PARTNERS BUT NOTES THE "FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION" OF THE FRENCH CLAIM OF DEFENDING A UNITED EUROPE WHILE REFUSING TO GRANT THE COMMUNITY THE NECESSARY MEANS TO MAKE ITSELF HEARD.

COMBAT SAYS THAT FRANCE "DELIBERATELY SHUT HERSELF OFF FROM A GROUP OF NATIONS WITH WHICH SHE HAS VITALLY IMPORTANT RELATIONS AND

WHOSE ILL HUMOR COULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE DAILY LIVES OF ALL
FRENCHMEN... WHAT IS MOST SERIOUS IS THAT TWELVE COUNTRIES WHICH
ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO US THAN ANY OTHERS DECIDED TO INSTITUTE
A JOINT ENERGY POLICY WHICH RUNS COUNTER TO THAT OF FRANCE. NOT
.../...IRWIN

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ONLY WILL WE BE DEPRIVED OF THE EVENTUAL BENEFITS OF THAT POLICY,
BUT WE ARE ALSO ITS DECLARED ADVERSARIES." COMBAT WARNS IN
CONCLUSION: "WE HAVE NOTHING MUCH TO FEAR FROM AMERICA; SHE

IS NOT VINDICTIVE AND WE HAVE JUST PROVED ONCE AGAIN THAT WE
DO NOT DISTURB HER VERY MUCH. BUT THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE VERY
CERTAIN OF THE DIVIDENDS IT EXPECTS FROM ITS ARAB POLICY IN ORDER
TO BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A CONFLICT WITH GERMANY... EUROPE
IS THREATENED WHEN FRANCE PROVIDES THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WITH
REASONS TO TURN AWAY AND GO LOOKING FOR LESS DISAPPOINTING
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FRIENDSHIPS IN THE WEST OR IN THE EAST."

3. IN GAULLIST LA NATION, HUBERT RODIER PRAISES FRANCE FOR
HOLDING TO ITS POSITION AND SAYS IT TOOK A PROLONGED CONFERENCE
FOR FRANCE TO CONVINCE ITS PARTNERS THAT "FRANCE HAS A FOREIGN
POLICY AND SHE IS STICKING TO IT... WHAT JUST HAPPENED IN THE
AMERICAN CAPITAL SHOWS, HOWEVER, THE CONTINUITY OF OUR POLICY
OF INDEPENDENCE ALONG A STRAIGHT HIGHWAY AND NOT VIA SECONDARY
ROADS... (AND SHOWS) AN INDEPENDENCE WORTHY OF A COUNTRY WHICH
REFUSES FOR EUROPE AS WELL AS FOR ITSELF ANY PROTECTORATE,
NO MATTER WHAT FORM IT TAKES, WHILE CONSIDERING ITSELF THE
'DIFFICULT BUT FAITHFUL ALLY' OF AMERICA."

4. LES ECHOS REPORTS ON FRONT PAGE THAT THE "BALANCE-SHEET
FROM THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE ON ENERGY IS RELATIVELY SLIM...
AND WHAT REMAINS IS EUROPEAN DISUNITY IN THE FACE OF ENCROACHING
ATLANTICISM, THE IMPOSSIBILITY FOR MR. KISSINGER TO IMPOSE HIS
VIEWS ON EVERYONE AND THE ISOLATION OF FRENCH POLICY IN SUCH
A FRAMEWORK." ON INSIDE PAGE, JACQUES CLERGIER WRITES THAT AT
LEAST THE CONFERENCE BROUGHT TO LIGHT "SOME REALITIES WHICH IT
WAS TOO EASY TO IGNORE" REGARDING INTER-EUROPEAN RELATIONS.
HE ARGUES THAT FRANCE'S PARTNERS MAY HAVE SOME TROUBLE WITH THE
ARABS BECAUSE OF THEIR POSITIONS AT THE CONFERENCE.

5. FRANCE-SOIR SEEMS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE ENERGY
CONFERENCE. ON PAGE ONE, SERGE MAFFERT ECHOING JOBERT'S
STATEMENT, WRITES THAT "THE CRISIS... SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A
SPLIT IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY NOR IN A BREAK BETWEEN FRANCE
AND THE UNITED STATES." INSIDE, GABRIEL FARKAS AND A. DE SEGONZAC
WRITE FROM WASHINGTON THAT THE CONFERENCE RESULTED IN A FAILURE
WHICH, "IN THE END, SATISFIED EVERYONE... KISSINGER IS DELIGHTED:...
(IT) MARKED THE START OF A NEW ATLANTICISM. MICHEL JOBERT IS
HAPPY: HE PROVED THERE WAS NO SOLUTION TO THE OIL CRISIS WITHOUT
THE PARTICIPATION OF PRODUCER NATIONS. THE GERMANS ARE RELIEVED:
THEY FEEL THEY REMAINED 'GOOD EUROPEANS' WHILE LINING UP UNDER
THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER OF THE UNITED STATES." IRWIN

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